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Letter dated 12 July 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to convey herewith a note that refutes the content of the letter dated 17 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2016/457) and certain elements in the statements of the same Mission delivered during meetings of the Security Council held on 4 May and 8 June 2016 (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Y. Halit **Çevik**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 12 July 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Note on the allegations by the Russian Federation on procurement efforts by Daesh/ISIL

The allegations contained in the letter dated 17 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations (S/2016/457) are based on a selective use of elements in the report published in February 2016 by Conflict Armament Research on items Daesh is allegedly obtaining to produce improvised explosive devices.

First and foremost, the report by Conflict Armament Research cannot be considered as the result of a legitimate or reliable investigation for many reasons, including the fact that its sources include a terrorist organization such as the YPG/PYD.

Second, the report is not about Turkey alone, since it mentions the names of 51 companies from 20 countries, including the Russian Federation. Unsurprisingly, the Russian Federation, in its letter, intentionally and conveniently ignores this fact.

Third, even though it does mention Turkey as one of the source countries for these items, the report does not accuse Turkey or any country for this matter, since it is indicated that there is no evidence to suggest, nor that Conflict Armament Research in any respect implies, any direct transfer of material to Daesh by the countries and companies mentioned in the report.

The report clearly states that the items in question, all subject to legitimate commercial transactions, are subsequently diverted to other users. The proximity of Turkey to the conflict zone, as well as its large mining and agricultural sectors where such items are widely used, are stated as the main reasons for Turkey being one of the countries for the supply of these items.

The items for which Turkey is mentioned are paint material, commercial chemicals, copper wire and detonating cords which are used in mining and construction. These items are all used in various economic activities. Other items mentioned in the report from other sources include mobile phones, transistors and telecommunication cables. All of these items are subject to free trading, the only exception being detonating cords, of which Turkey does not allow the export to either Iraq or Syria due to the situation in these countries. This fact has also been confirmed by Turkish companies Conflict Armament Research has apparently directly contacted and is therefore reflected in the report. It is worth noting that Turkey has taken additional steps to address the risk of diversion of commercial chemicals and materials, such as ammonium nitrate, potassium nitrate and detonating cord, including by prohibiting their export to Syria.

While most of the items listed in the letter from the Russian Federation could be procured through numerous sources, the same cannot be said of certain weapons used by Daesh in targeting Turkish towns bordering Syria. It is crucial that the source of these weapons and materiel be investigated.

As can be easily inferred by the above, the Russian Federation has once again attempted to divert attention from the negative implications of its operations in Syria, which it uses to advance its political agenda in the region, under the pretext of fighting terrorism.

Moreover, the Russian Federation often attempts to benefit from the public meetings of the Security Council, which non-members of the Council cannot attend, to voice its allegations against Turkey, the latest of such conduct having occurred on 4 May and 8 June 2016. We refute claims voiced by the Russian Federation during those meetings in their entirety.